U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. Embassy, Yerevan
Notice of Funding Opportunity

Funding Opportunity Title: *U.S. Alumni Outreach Small Grants Program Competition*
Funding Opportunity Number: *Alumni-FY21-01*
Deadline for Applications: *April 15, 2021*
Assistance Listing Number: *19.900*
Total Amount Available: *Up to $100,000 pending the availability of funds*

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

U.S. Embassy Yerevan, of the U.S. Department of State, announces the U.S. Alumni Outreach Small Grants Program competition for fiscal year 2021, aiming to maintain contacts with alumni of exchange programs supported by the U.S. Government (USG) and to encourage networking among alumni and their colleagues in fields that promote democratic advancement, civic education, youth empowerment, and economic reform.

Individual alumni of all USG-funded and USG-sponsored exchange programs (including programs supported by ECA, USAID and USDA), as well as Armenian-registered NGOs (non-profit, non-governmental organizations), that have alumni members are eligible to apply for funding.

Program Objectives:

Project proposals should aim to address the following program priorities:

- Support democratic institutions, promote civic engagement and political dialogue;
- Extend development and empowerment opportunities for youth from the regions of Armenia;
- Promote social inclusion and strengthen civic participation and rights protection of marginalized communities;
- Localize best practices and expertise gained during the exchange program in the United States in support of economic reform, good governance and transparency;
- Support initiatives that promote digital security/safety and critical thinking skills and counter hate speech.

Grants should be used to carry out specific, concrete projects with measurable and realistic results. Project proposals should describe specific objectives, outcomes, intended audiences, and should include starting and ending dates of the project that do not exceed twelve months. We encourage networking among alumni and cooperative projects between partnering NGOs. Involving the regions of Armenia in any aspect of the proposal is strongly encouraged.

Participants and Audiences:

Please be specific when mentioning the target audience(s) of your proposed project, including demographic information and the approximate number of beneficiaries directly and indirectly impacted by project activities.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period:	*Up to 12 months*
Number of awards anticipated:	*Up to 10 awards (depending on award budgets)*
Award Ceiling:	*$5,000 for individual grants and $10,000 for awards to NGOs*
Total available funding:	*Up to $100,000*
Type of Funding:	*AEECA under the Foreign Assistance Act*
Anticipated project start date:	*July 1, 2021*

NOTE: This notice is subject to funds availability.

Funding Instrument Type: Grant, fixed amount award, or cooperative agreement. The type of funding instrument, exact amount of funding, the scope of work, and the terms and conditions of a successful award will be determined in pre-award negotiations between the applicant and U.S. Embassy representatives after the application has been selected for funding.

Cooperative agreements will be used only for awards to organizations in case the proposed project involves substantial U.S. Embassy involvement. "Substantial involvement" means that, after the award is approved for funding, U.S. Embassy staff will assist, guide, coordinate, or participate in project activities in a partnership role. The U.S. Embassy will not assume direction, primary responsibility, or a dominant role in project activities. These reside with the recipient for the entirety of the project.

Program Performance Period: Proposed projects should be completed in 12 months or less.

C. ELIGILIBITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants: The following entities are eligible to apply:

- Alumni of all USG-funded and USG-sponsored exchange programs that are residents of Armenia;
- Armenian-registered not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations, that have USG alumni members;
- Independent media outlets registered in Armenia that have USG alumni members.

Please note that American and third-country organizations and individuals are not eligible to apply. In case of institutional applicants, the representative(s) of the USG Alumni community need(s) to have a substantial involvement in the management/activities of the project.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing is encouraged but not required. Matching is not required.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a unique entity identifier (Data Universal Numbering System/DUNS number from Dun & Bradstreet), as well as a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 for information on how to obtain these registrations. Individuals are not required to have a unique entity identifier or be registered in SAM.gov.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. **Application**

   All applications must be written in English and submitted **by April 15, 2021,11:59 p.m.** local (Armenian) time using the application portal available at the following links:

   For individuals: https://bit.ly/3s8GIdo
   For organizations: https://bit.ly/3dq0nRS

   Only applications submitted before the deadline will be considered for funding. After submitting the application electronically, the portal will notify the applicants about their successful submission.

2. **Content and Form of Application Submission**:

   Applications received after the April 15, 2021 deadline, will not be reviewed. Applications lacking any of the required elements, or which do not follow the instructions listed in this funding announcement, will be deemed ineligible.

   Content of Applications:

   The following application documents are **required**:

   1. The official application form available under the links mentioned in Section D.1
   2. SF424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs) and SF-424B (Assurances for Non-construction Programs) forms appended at the end of the online application. Please download the forms, fill them out and upload the filled-out versions directly into the online application.
   3. Detailed budget and budget narrative presented in a clear and understandable format and uploaded in the respective fields in the online application portal. See section H. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions below for further information.

4. The project proposal typed directly in the application portal. The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. The proposal should include the below information:

- ❖ **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed project, including project objectives and anticipated impact.
- ❖ **Introduction to the Organization or Individual applying**: A description of past and present operations, showing ability to carry out the project, including information on all previous grants from the U.S. Embassy and/or U.S. government agencies.
- ❖ **Problem Statement:** A clear, concise, and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed project is needed.
- ❖ **Project Goals and Objectives:** The "goals" describe what the project is intended to achieve. The "objectives" refer to the intermediate accomplishments on the way to the goals. These should be achievable and measurable.
- ❖ **Project Activities, Methods and Design**: Describe the project activities and how they will help achieve the objectives. A description of how the project is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal.
- ❖ **Proposed Project Schedule and Timeline:** The proposed timeline for the project activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
- ❖ **Key Personnel:** Names, titles, roles, and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the project. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this project?
- ❖ **Project Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.
- ❖ **Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the duration of the grant, the project monitoring and evaluation plan explains how the activities will be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how the project will be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant.
- ❖ **Future Funding or Sustainability:** This section explains the applicant's plan for continuing the project beyond the grant period, and/or the availability of other resources, if applicable.

Please ensure that:

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity
- All documents are in English
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars

Attachments:

- One-page CV of the USG Alumni and the key personnel of the project (required);
- Official registration documents (required for organizations);
- Letters of support from project partners (if any) describing the roles and responsibilities of each partner;
- Official permission letters, if required for project activities;

- Other optional materials that the applicant feels are necessary for the accurate evaluation of the project proposal (recommendation letters, project materials, brochures etc.).

3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

Required Registrations:
Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in the [System for Award Management (SAM)](#) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension." Additionally, no entity listed on the EPLS can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the EPLS in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

All organizations applying for grants (except individuals) must obtain these registrations. All are free of charge:
- Unique entity identifier from Dun & Bradstreet (DUNS number)
- NCAGE/CAGE code
- www.SAM.gov registration

Step 1: Apply for a DUNS number and an NCAGE number (these can be completed simultaneously)

DUNS application: Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet. If your organization does not have one already, you may obtain one by calling 1-866-705-5711 or visiting http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform

NCAGE application: Application page [here](#):
Instructions for the NCAGE application process can be found [here:](#)

For NCAGE help from within the U.S., call 1-888-227-2423
For NCAGE help from outside the U.S., call 1-269-961-7766
Email NCAGE@dlis.dla.mil for any problems in getting an NCAGE code.

Step 2: After receiving the NCAGE Code, proceed to register in SAM.gov by logging onto: https://www.sam.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due no later than April 15, 2021,11:59 p.m. local (Armenian) time.

5. Funding Restrictions

The funds requested under this program CANNOT fund partisan political activity; humanitarian aid and charities or charitable activities; scientific research; fundraising campaigns; commercial projects; trade activities; conferences and individual trips abroad; projects aimed primarily at the

institutional development of the recipient organization. Please note that award funds cannot be used to purchase alcoholic beverages.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Evaluation Criteria

Each application will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below.

Proposals will be evaluated according to the project's relevance to the Alumni Outreach Small Grants Program goals; the extent to which the project has clearly formulated objectives, target groups, and expected outcomes; and the ability of the applicant to carry out the project aims.

Quality and Feasibility of the Project Idea – (25) points: The project idea is well developed, with detail about how project activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline.

Project Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – (30) points: Goals and objectives are clearly stated and project approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

Budget – (10) points: The budget justification is detailed. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The budget is realistic, accounting for all necessary expenses to achieve proposed activities.

Expected Results and Project's Sustainability – (20 points): Project activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the project. Applicant demonstrates it can measure project success against key indicators and provides milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The project includes output and outcome indicators and shows how and when those will be measured.

Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants – (15 points): The applicant has expertise in its stated field and has the internal controls in place to manage federal funds.

The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses. Each criterion includes factors reviewers will consider in determining how well an application meets that criterion. Applications that best address these criteria will be the most competitive.

2. Review and Selection Process

A Grants Review Committee will evaluate all eligible applications. Reviewers' final scores will be combined and averaged to produce a final rank order of the proposals for each panel/priority. Final approvals from responsible offices at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, DC, will be obtained before the grants are signed.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

The grant award or cooperative agreement will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document, and it will be provided to the recipient for review and signature by email. The recipient may only start incurring project expenses beginning on the start date shown on the grant award document signed by the Grants Officer.

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the discretion of the Department of State.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. Government, nor does it commit the U.S. Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the U.S. Government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

Payment Method: Payments will, in general, be made in at least two segments. An initial segment will be authorized to initiate the project. The applicant must provide a report about the use of the previous segment of funds before the consecutive segment is released.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Before applying, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply.

These include:

- 2 CFR 25 - UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT

- 2 CFR 170 - REPORTING SUBAWARD AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION INFORMATION

- 2 CFR 175 - AWARD TERM FOR TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

- 2 CFR 182 - GOVERNMENTWIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE (FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE)

- [2 CFR 183 - NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY](#)

- [2 CFR 600 – DEPARTMENT OF STATE REQUIREMENTS](#)

- [U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS](#)

In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant Executive guidance, the Department of State will review and consider applications for funding, as applicable to specific programs, pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity in accordance with the following: NOTE:

- President's September 2, 2020 memorandum, entitled *Memorandum on Reviewing Funding to State and Local Government Recipients of Federal Funds that Are Permitting Anarchy, Violence, and Destruction in American Cities*;
- *Executive Order on Protecting American Monuments, Memorials, and Statues and Combating Recent Criminal Violence* (E.O. 13933); and
- [Guidance for Grants and Agreements in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations](#) (2 CFR), as updated in the Federal Register's 85 FR 49506 on August 13, 2020, particularly on:
  - Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an objective process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR part 200.205),
  - Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment in alignment with section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115—232) (2 CFR part 200.216),
  - Promoting the freedom of speech and religious liberty in alignment with *Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty* (E.O. 13798) and *Improving Free Inquiry, Transparency, and Accountability at Colleges and Universities* (E.O. 13864) (§§ 200.300, 200.303, 200.339, and 200.341),
  - Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR part 200.322), and
  - Terminating agreements in whole or in part to the greatest extent authorized by law, if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340).

Reporting Requirements: Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted. All recipients must submit a formal report to the Grants Officer upon completion of the project. The report should discuss what was done, whether the project was successful from the applicant's perspective and how it might be improved in the future. Copies of video materials, CDs and other video and audio aids generated during the implementation of the project attesting to the success of the grant activities are welcome, and sometimes required indeed. An accounting of the use of the grant funds must also be included. Successful applicants will be required to include gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data in their reporting.

Foreign Assistance Data Review: As required by Congress, the Department of State must make progress in its efforts to improve tracking and reporting of foreign assistance data through the Foreign Assistance Data Review (FADR). The FADR requires tracking of foreign assistance activity data from budgeting, planning, and allocation through obligation and disbursement. Successful applicants will be required to report and draw down federal funding based on the appropriate FADR Data Elements, indicated within their award documentation. In cases of more than one FADR Data Element, typically program or sector and/or regions or country, the successful applicant will be required to maintain separate accounting records.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact at manukyana@state.gov.

The U.S. Embassy will be holding informative presentations for alumni and local NGOs throughout Armenia to provide additional information and details about the U.S. Alumni Outreach Grants Program Competition. Presentation dates and locations will be shared on the official Facebook page of the U.S. Embassy Yerevan.

H. OTHER INFORMATION

Guidelines for Budget Justification:

Grants may not cover the following costs:
1. Social welfare projects;
2. Capital improvements;
3. Purchase of furniture and office decorations;
4. Purchase of vehicles;
5. Projects that contain the appearance of partisanship/support for electoral campaigns;
6. Academic or analytical research (if not part of a larger project);
7. Scholarships;
8. Paying the costs of international participants/guest speakers at events;
9. Medical and psychological research, and clinical studies;
10. Provision of health care services;
11. Projects of a commercial nature;
12. Entertainment costs (social activities, ceremonies, alcoholic beverages, cocktail parties, guided tours).

Budget guidelines

To be sure that the Review Panel understands why there is a need for funding, the applicant should **prepare a line-by-line, detailed list of expenses** that is envisioned for this project. Budgets should be submitted in U.S. dollars. The budget should be prepared in a logical manner and offer enough detail that a reviewer will be able to understand exactly what the figures mean and how that figure was determined.

The proposal should also include a narrative text statement that explains very precisely the proposed budget so that members of the Panel will understand exactly how the money would be spent. The budget narrative should follow the actual budget presentation itself and describe in detail the costs presented in the budget. In other words, the narrative explains, line by line, what the numbers mean and how they were determined.

"Cost Sharing" refers to contributions from the organization or other entities other than the U.S. Embassy. It also includes in-kind contributions such as volunteers' time and donated venues.

Program Expenses should cover costs for the project activities. They may include preparation or acquisition of literature or educational materials; honoraria to specialists or associates; expenses for seminars or conferences (speaker's fee, preparation of materials and room rental), etc.

If the proposal seeks funding to purchase items/services with any single item exceeding $1,000 in cost, the application must include three pro-forma estimates from different vendors stipulating the market price of the desired item.

Salaries should be paid only to the people who will have a direct and specific involvement in the project which is not otherwise within the regular scope of their duties and who will spend a majority of their time on the project. Salaries should not be requested for the ongoing, operational job remuneration of the organization staff. The salary should be calculated on the total number of hours worked for the duration of the project (the percentage of the person's monthly involvement with the project is the preferable calculation formula). Salary levels should be reasonable and no higher than other local salaries. Please bear in mind that the total amount of salaries to be funded should not exceed 20% of the total budget.

Equipment refers to the following: computers, copying machines, printers, or other technical devices necessary for the fulfillment of the project the unit price of which exceeds $5,000. Other equipment proposed for purchase that is not critical to the fulfillment of the project will be excluded (for example, the purchase of a computer for organizing a conference is not a justified expense). Remember that renting equipment for the short-term project activities is often preferable to the Panel than an outright purchase.

The use of "miscellaneous expenses" as a budget item is unacceptable.

Meals not integral to a project event are not acceptable grant expenses. An effort should be made to secure funding from other sources for food costs. When these costs cannot be supported otherwise, they should be clearly justified and limited to a maximum of 10% of the total award amount. This includes expenses associated with individual per diems for grant-related activities.

Indirect Costs: These are costs that cannot be linked directly to the project activities, such as overhead costs needed to help keep the organization operating. If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, attach a copy

of your latest NICRA. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may request indirect costs of 10% of the modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68. "Cost Sharing" refers to contributions from the organization or other entities other than the U.S. Embassy. It also includes in-kind contributions such as volunteers' time and donated venues.

Entertainment Costs, including amusement, diversion, and social activities and any associated costs are unallowable, except where specific costs that might otherwise be considered entertainment have a programmatic purpose and are authorized either in the approved budget for the award or with prior written approval of the U.S. Embassy Grants Officer.

Alcoholic Beverages: Please note that award funds cannot be used for alcoholic beverages.

Other information:

Grants for publication of materials should describe the intended audience, content, and how materials will be distributed. Grants for seminars/workshops should describe the expected audience, content, and timeframe. If a seminar or a training workshop is proposed in the application, it should also contain the attachments of the training materials that will be used for the training.

Recommendations:

Please do not send the application before you:

➢ Read this document once more, and make sure you understand the guidelines and that your proposal fits the purposes of the program.
➢ Carefully review the application to make sure it is complete and free of errors.
➢ Ask someone who does not know anything about your project to read your proposal to determine if it is understandable, and if the provided information is comprehensive enough.
➢ Ask someone with experience applying for grants to look at the application and provide advice on improving it.
➢ Make sure the application is neatly typed and easy to read in English. Perfect English is not required but the proposal must be understandable to an English speaker.